



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

55 MAIN STREET • P.O. BOX 187
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187

CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

April 25, 2006

MEMBERS PRESENT: Charlotte Adams, Tim Olmsted, John O'Shaughnessy, Gary Riley, Terry Shook and Joe Wehr

OTHERS PRESENT: Leo Miller [arrived 8:10 p.m.]

1. CALL TO ORDER:

MOVED (ADAMS), SECONDED (O'SHAUGHNESSY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO OPEN THE MEETING OF THE CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION (CRC) AT 7:06 P.M. IN THE TOWN HALL, 55 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT.

2. CITIZENS FORUM: None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

a. April 6, 2006 Regular Meeting

MOVED (SHOOK), SECONDED (RILEY) AND PASSED [O'SHAUGHNESSY ABSTAINED] TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 6, 2006.

4. CONSIDER CHANGES TO TOWN CHARTER

a. Form of Town Government

Mr. Shook stated that a letter was sent to 20 local civic organizations suggesting that the subcommittee make a presentation at one of their meeting regarding a change in Town government. The subcommittee recently met and discussed the options and fiscal impact of such a change. Mr. Shook commented that the financial impact may be the most difficult obstacle to overcome. Mrs. Adams stated that Larry Schaffer, Town Administrator in Vernon, has agreed to make a presentation to the CRC at the May 23 meeting. She asked the members if they had any specific questions they would like him to address. The following topics were suggested: Overview of the different forms of government; the difference between a Town Manager and a Town Administrator; shared services; contract bidding procedures; outsourcing; employee insurance coverage. Mrs. Adams asked the members to email her with any additional questions/topics.

b. Town-wide Shared Services, including Building Maintenance and Finance

Chairman Wehr spoke with Jeff Smith, Director of Finance for the Town of Mansfield and distributed a handout on their shared services program. Mr. Smith has agreed to make a presentation to the CRC. Mr. Wehr will see if he is available for the June 27 meeting.

c. Other Changes

Mrs. Adams contacted the Town Attorney regarding dividing the budget between General Government and Board of Education. The Town Attorney advised her that a Charter change would be necessary; however, he expressed concern that doing so would split the Town and create separate camps. In addition, the Town could end up with half a budget and still need to hold a referendum for the other half. The CRC agreed to propose a Charter change allowing the option for the Board of Selectmen to split the budget in the event a referendum does not pass the first time. Mrs. Adams will draft language for review by the Town Attorney and the CRC.

Regarding the proposal requiring expenditures of \$1 million or more to go to automatic referendum, Mr. Olmsted pointed out that safeguards are already in place in the Charter in Section 603 – Special Town Meetings.

Mr. Riley distributed draft language (attached) for Section 1009 (J) which mandates that grant approval be obtained by the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance prior to accepting grants.

Mr. Olmsted reviewed the language he drafted (attached) that would eliminate the Public Safety Commission and establish an Emergency Management Commission. It was suggested that the membership include the same criteria used for the Public Safety Commission [nine (9) members, to serve for terms of three (3) years: five (5) members shall be citizens who are not members of any of the emergency services within the Town of Ellington; one (1) member from the Ellington Volunteer Fire Department; one (1) member from the Crystal Lake Volunteer Fire Department; one (1) member from the Ellington Volunteer Ambulance Corps; one (1) member from the Police Department] and the Emergency Management Director.

Mr. Olmsted reviewed the language he drafted (attached) regarding establishing an Ethics Commission. The members agreed that an Ordinance needs to be in place and will send a letter to the Board of Selectmen requesting that the Ordinance Committee address this issue. Mr. Olmsted suggested using the Town of East Windsor as a model.

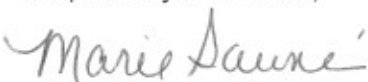
MOVED (OLMSTED), SECONDED (ADAMS) TO REQUEST THAT THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN ASK THE ORDINANCE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER AN ETHICS ORDINANCE FOR THE TOWN OF ELLINGTON.

The CRC reviewed the table that Mr. Riley prepared regarding alternate members on boards/commission. Mrs. Sauve will research some inaccuracies pointed out.

6. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED (O'SHAUGHNESSY), SECONDED (ADAMS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THIS MEETING AT 9:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Marie Sauve
Recording Secretary

Section 1009. Expenditures and Accounting

- (j) All grant requests that have the potential to impose ^{any} ~~A~~ financial burden on the town must first be approved by the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance. At the time of the request all information regarding future costs and/or responsibilities must be presented to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance for review.

Delete

Section 808 Public Safety Commission

Add

Section XXX - Emergency Management Commission. The BOS shall appoint a town Director of Emergency Management (DEM) that shall chair this commission. The DEM shall prepare, exercise, and maintain a comprehensive plan to allow the Town of Ellington to conduct consequence management for either natural or manmade disasters. The Commission shall review and maintain all Town emergency plans consistent in format for plans developed by the State of Connecticut and the National Response Plan. The Commission shall maintain active communications with all Ellington emergency service provider, surrounding municipalities, state, and federal agencies to insure that Ellington maintains the ability to provide its citizens with continuity of government, crisis, and consequence management. The Commission shall disseminate informational and educational materials to enhance public awareness of disaster response and planning.

The DEM is responsible for:

- All required training under NIMS for Town Officials and Commission members
- Applying for state and federal grants for homeland security
- Developing response plans and assigning staff members/Town agencies to specific support functions
- Executing specific response plans
- Exercising Town response plans no less than bi-annually
- Serve as the primary advisor to the First Selectman during a consequence management response, providing timely input to request state and federal aid per the Stafford Act.

ETHICS

Section XXX – Ethics Commission. The BOS shall appoint a Ethics Commission (EC). The EC shall promote and affirm ethical behavior of the Town's Boards, commissions, employees, elected, and appointed officials. The EC shall develop a Ethics Code for the Town.

The EC will receive inquiries and requests for advisory opinions from town officials, employees, consultants, and residences regarding possible code violations and will respond with formal procedures:

- Review, evaluate, resolve, and adjudicate, as appropriate, ethical issues and concerns,
- Disseminate informational and educational materials to enhance public awareness of the code and,
- Maintain open-minded impartiality in all EC dealings consistent with the application of precedent and rationale in its decision making.